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VOLUME VI

BROTHER SAVES BABY SISTER FROM OIL SUMP DEATH

Expectant Mom's Tears Melt Heart Of Judge

Asking mercy with her tears because she did not want to have her baby born in jail, Mrs. Barbara Kay Jefferson, 41, of 2667 W. Carson st., Torrance, had her jail sentence cut in half by a compassionate judge Tuesday.

Mrs. Jefferson was first sentenced to six months in jail on a forgery charge. The sentence was reduced to three months.

The young mother burst into tears when the six months' term was imposed by Judge Joseph M. Baily of the Long Beach Superior court.

After sentence was imposed, the young mother kept crying for an hour while waiting to be transported back to jail.

The judge then stopped the trial and called Mrs. Jefferson before him again.

"I'm going to reduce your sentence to three months, but not because of you," he said. (Continued on Page 6)

PV Tries To Block Annexation

Torrance's placidly developing annexation issue erupted like a keg of dynamite last week when it was detected that Palos Verdes tried noisily to scuttle the machinery at the eleventh hour.

By a clever maneuver, whose legality appears doubtful, Palos Verdes is trying to throw up another iron curtain, in the form of a buffer zone, which would separate Torrance from the area proposed for annexation. If Palos Verdes succeeds in annexing that strip of land, Torrance could not annex the 6513 acres now under consideration. Only land which directly adjoins a city may be annexed.

Those close to the Torrance annexation issue got wind of (Continued on Page 9)

2 MEN BURNED ALIVE

Two men were scorched to death beyond recognition when their shack-like home burst into flames shortly before midnight Tuesday in the forsaken Dominguez area off Del Amo blvd., west of Hawthorne ave.

Desperately trying to escape an agonizing death, the two men failed to open one of the doors locked shut by chains. Their bodies lay piled against the door.

Dead are Lewis Monson, 40, and Eddie Vargas, 60. Two Torrance engines under (Continued on Page 6)

Columbia Steel Starts Fourth Hearth Furnace

A fourth basic open hearth furnace was placed in operation this week at the Torrance works of the Columbia-Geneva steel division of United States Steel, it was announced today.

C. C. Morgan, general superintendent, said the fourth 60-ton furnace was lighted to meet an upswing in orders for raw steel stock.

The mill, which produces semi-finished steel, structural shapes, hot rolled bars and other steel items, will continue at a four-furnace level as long as the demand continues, he said.

Addition of the fourth furnace, which will increase the (Continued on Page 6)

EDITORIAL

Let's Get Some Action

It's high time again to stir up a tempest about a too familiar villain . . . oil sumps and oil wells. It's high time because a two-year-old baby was almost killed Tuesday when it fell head-first into an unfenced sump.

Only quick-thinking on the part of her brother saved her. We've been harping about the oil sump and oil well hazards for more than three years.

It's exasperating that the City Council won't settle the issue once and for all.

How long do parents have to live in fear of unfenced sumps and the temptation they offer to children?

Why is it that the city ordinance requiring the fencing of sumps is not rigorously enforced?

Why is it that every effort is not expended to clear Torrance of its dilapidated and abandoned wooden oil derricks which are ready to topple at the slightest provocation?

Torrance was more fortunate this time than Wilmington only a few weeks ago. A Torrance youngster was saved from a dreadful death. A Wilmington youngster was crushed to death by an unfenced oil well on which he was playing.

It's time for our Torrance City Council to act. It's later than we think.

Nab Dope Suspect, Pleads 'Guilty', Then 'Not Guilty'

The idea of a six months' jail sentence for possessing narcotics didn't appeal to Richard William Calder, 22, of 21606 Moneta ave., who changed his plea to "not guilty" after first pleading "guilty" to the charge last week.

Trial was set for March 9 in South Bay Municipal Court by Judge John Shidler.

Calder was arrested at his home last week Wednesday by Sgt. D. C. Cook, Officer Gus Rethwisch and Inspectors Hank Dowdy and Bales of the State Narcotics division.

Calder was hiding under his bed and had to be pulled out. Found in his room were four jars of narcotics, including seconal, benzedrine, "green devils," and "goof balls," according to Sgt. Cook.

Police suspect that Calder sold the drugs to younger children.

(Continued on Page 6)

Plan Expansion of Harbor Gen. Hospital

Initial step in the proposed expansion program for Harbor General hospital was taken Tuesday when County Supervisor Burton W. Chace approved plans and ordered the advertising of bids for the construction of a new medical dormitory at the facility.

Chace said the new dormitory will house 12 resident physicians, and the estimate of cost for construction is approximately \$44,500. The supervisor pointed out that at the present time the county is paying more than \$6000 a year rent for private dwellings to house the staff members who will live in the new dormitory.

Chace also revealed that earlier fragmentary studies threatened the removal of the hospital from its present location to a northerly site near Inglewood.

However, he announced, the studies have been completed and now show that not only should the hospital remain at its present location, but the increasing need for service justifies an over-all expansion program.

5 Vital Topics Discussed At 1st Lomita Chamber Meeting

Members of the Lomita Chamber of Commerce boldly tackled five major issues as they launched their program for 1955. The group held its first general meeting Monday night under the leadership of Tim McCormick, newly installed president.

Action was taken on the following matters:

- 1) Setting up a Civil Defense program for Lomita;
- 2) Promoting a local civic center;
- 3) Considering Torrance's annexation issue and its eventual effect on Lomita;
- 4) Obtaining legislation against dangerous oil wells;
- 5) Supporting the school bond issue on the April 5 ballot.

Civil Defense

Aroused over the present lack of leadership and information regarding Civil Defense measures, members voted unanimously to contact county, state and federal officials for an adequate Civil Defense program.

In addition to making this motion, Leonard Loy, past president, called for energetic leadership in arousing public participation in such a program.

LATE BULLETIN: Residents in Los Angeles city territory are combining forces in a campaign to get action against oil wells and oil sumps. The drive is being headed by John F. Schlingloff, 1061 N. Gulf ave., Inglewood, TE. 4-8319. A delegation will march on the L. A. City Council March 10, according to Tim McCormick. McCormick will represent the Lomita Chamber of Commerce.

President McCormick received the group's wholehearted support in seeking legislation against unfenced oil wells. Referring to a Wilmington oil well which crushed a child to death recently, McCormick stated:

"The same situation will happen with some of the 'beasts' we have around here unless something is done. I'll fight this thing myself if I have to."

Civic Center

The Lomita Chamber will also contact county officials in order to get a commitment for (Continued on Page 9)



GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS . . . Newly installed officers of the Lomita Chamber of Commerce presided over their first meeting of the year Monday night. They are [l-r] Mrs.

Evelyn Wilson (treasurer); Miss Kathy Walters, secretary; Tim McCormick, president; and Dave Wilkinson, vice-president.



DEATH TRAP . . . This is the sump into which little Jackie Farnelli fell head-first Monday afternoon. She was saved from certain death by her six-year-old brother, Michael, who just managed to drag her out, losing his shoe in the attempt.

Looking at the sump is 4 1/2-year-old Kenny Molloy who lives nearby. The unfenced sump violates a city ordinance. A lack of rigid and vigilant enforcement seems apparent.



KATHY, 2 . . . narrowly escapes death

Illegal Sump Left Unfenced

Quick action by her six-year-old brother saved a two-year-old baby girl from death when she fell head-first into an unfenced, illegal oil sump on 229th st. just west of Arlington ave. late Monday afternoon.

Michael Farnelli saved his baby sister, Jackie, when he managed to reach a portion of her clothing and pulled her out of the sump into which she had fallen.

Parents of the children are Mr. and Mrs. James Farnelli of 22911 Arlington.

LATE BULLETIN: Following news of the sump incident, Torrance city officials took steps to draft an urgency ordinance which calls for prohibiting the forming of new sumps and for requiring tight chain link fences around existing sumps. Following action against the sumps, action has been promised against oil wells, pumps, and abandoned derricks, according to George Powell, city land use coordinator.

Michael's screams for help brought the grandmother and mother to the scene who rushed the child to a private physician, according to Officer A. L. Jackson of the Torrance police.

The little girl suffered scalp and face burns from the oil but was said to be out of danger, according to her father.

Responding to the call were Police Officers Jack Hahn and Bob Wright.

Torrance has ordinances which require sumps and wells to (Continued on Page 6)



MICHAEL, 6 . . . hero

LATE NEWS

THREE-LANE HIGHWAYS: Mayor Nick Drae asked that a study be made by the Traffic Commission to eliminate three-lane highways in Torrance because of their traffic hazard. He had reference to Arlington avenue between Sepulveda and (Continued on Page 6)

Torrance 'Invasion' Set In Civil Defense Drill

If you think Torrance is being invaded next Tuesday night, March 8, you're right. But don't be alarmed. The full-scale "invasion" is being staged as part of an all-out accelerated Civil Defense program in order to protect Torrance against future attack.

Operation "Dominguez" will take place north of Torrance blvd. between Madrona ave. and Maple ave. (just north of the new civic center site).

Aim Purpose of the mock-battle is to afford local police, National Guard personnel, and Civil Defense units a chance to solve problems of coordination, communications, and command and to get people interested in Civil Defense, according to Capt. Douglas J. Horlander, coordinator of Operation "Dominguez."

The problem will involve combating enemy paratroops and decontaminating the Dominguez water reservoir, object of enemy sabotage.

Participating units include Bridge co, 132nd Armored Engineer battalion, California National Guard, Capt. Douglas

Horlander, commanding; Torrance Civil Defense units; George Powell, director; Torrance City Police, Willard H. Haslam, chief of police; and Torrance Mounted Police Auxiliary, Sgt. D. C. Cook, commanding.

Order of Events Time schedule is as follows: 7 p.m. Police notified by Ralph King, supervisor of the Dominguez company, that there are prowlers on the property.

7:15 p.m. Police notify Bridge co. of emergency.

7:30 p.m. Visitors arrive at reservoir area.

7:45 p.m. Bridge co. arrives at reservoir, establishes perimeter defense.

7:45 p.m. Mounted Police Auxiliary arrives at reservoir, establishes screen around area.

8:15 p.m. Aggressor at-

tempts infiltration. 8:35 p.m. Aggressor fires red star cluster, attempts first attack. Wounded removed.

9:05 p.m. Aggressor fires second red star cluster, attempts second attack.

9:15 p.m. Problem called off 9:15 p.m. Discussion and evaluation.

A reviewing stand will be set up for officials and guests, according to Capt. Horlander.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the following: Capt. Horlander, FA. 8-6055, FR. 4-3428 or FR. 2-7231 (nights).

Captain Horton P. Smith, FR. 2-6611, FR. 4-7269 (nights).

Torrance Police Department, FA. 8-3456.

Torrance Civil Defense, FA. 8-5310.